

EPA Region III

Office of Public Affairs

EARLY BIRD HEADLINES

Tuesday, September , 2012

*** MORNING HOT LIST ***

Editorial: Better air: Let's bring the county code into the 21st century

PITTSBURGH POST GAZETTE When President Nixon signed the Clean Air Act in 1970, polluters said the cost of compliance would be devastating. Yet 42 years later the nation has reaped both health and economic benefits from the act and from the improvements made to it in 1990. The Environmental Protection Agency says the landmark law's first 20 years prevented 205,000 premature deaths, 672,000 cases of bronchitis, 21,000 cases of heart disease and 18 million child respiratory illnesses. Since 1990, lead in the air has dropped by 92 percent and toxic emissions from industry have been cut by 1.7 million tons a year -- while the gross domestic product grew by 64 percent. The nation still burns coal for electricity, and factory smokestacks still dot the horizon. In other words, industry adjusted to the Clean Air Act, just as it will adjust to Allegheny County's first revision of air pollution guidelines in 24 years. Yet some businesses have objected to the updated county code that was produced after two years of discussion and compromise by the 22-member Air Toxics Guidelines Task Force. In June the panel of industry, environment and regulatory representatives unanimously recommended that the code be adopted by the board of health. By the time the public comment period ended Aug. 13, the county had received 226 written responses on the proposal. More than 200 favored the revision, while 13 from companies and business groups called for rejection or delay. Also, last month the county's Air Quality Citizens Advisory Committee, five of whose seven members are industry attorneys and representatives, voted 5-1 with one abstention against the code. None of that should stop the board of health from approving the plan at its Sept. 19 meeting. The update of the 1988 emissions code is necessary because it has no exposure limits and doesn't account for modern-day chemical emissions and their effects. In fact, industry should appreciate that the revision does not apply to existing pollution sources, but only new or significantly altered sites. Plenty of time has been spent weighing the input of plenty of stakeholders. It's a sign of the plan's moderation that some environmentalists believe it falls short while some corporations say it goes too far. This is a plan the county can live with and breathe with.

Coal jobs could rebound after 2020, report says

CHARLESTON GAZETTE CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Appalachian coal jobs are expected to decline over the next dozen years, but could rebound and even increase after 2020 as mine production stabilizes at lower levels, according to a new analysis by the West Virginia Center for Budget and Policy. Sean O'Leary, a policy analyst at the center, examined coal production forecasts, productivity projections and employment data for the analysis, published Thursday on the organization's website. The report provides a new twist in the ongoing discussion about the future of Southern West Virginia's coal industry, which is facing intense competition from natural gas, a decline in quality reserves, and pressures from new regulations. O'Leary emphasized that there's no

way to know for sure if the projections are right, but that state leaders should be looking closely and preparing for changes in the industry. "The coal industry in West Virginia, particularly Southern West Virginia, will be dramatically changing, and soon," O'Leary wrote. "That's why it is so important to ask questions like, 'What is the effect on employment?' and prepare for that transition." The center has, for example, proposed that the state form a "coal-mining transition task force" to help communities look for viable ways to ease the possible impacts and search for economic alternatives. The organization has also been promoting the idea for an increase in coal and natural gas taxes to form a fund dedicated to funding education and infrastructure improvements that would help with an economic transition. Forecasts from the U.S. Department of Energy show steep declines over the next decade in coal production from Appalachia, especially the Central Appalachian area that includes Southern West Virginia and Eastern Kentucky. In part, those declines are expected to occur because of a decline in coal-mining productivity driven at least partially by the mining-out of high-quality and easy-to-get reserves. O'Leary's analysis suggests a bright spot from that trend could be that reduced productivity means companies will need more miners to produce the same -- or perhaps even lower -- amounts of coal. O'Leary calculated one estimate that showed Central Appalachian coal jobs declining from 35,400 in 2010 to a low of 25,190 in 2020, but then rebounding to 45,400 by 2035.

Investigation questions EPA money spent to fund newspaper

WASHINGTON GUARDIAN Once a month, a free print publication gets delivered to mailboxes, coffee shops and libraries across the Mid-Atlantic with the latest news about how the government and private sector are trying to protect one of America's natural crown jewels: the Chesapeake Bay. The *Chesapeake Bay Journal* looks like any other newspaper, its print and Web editions having become monthly fixtures along the eastern shores of Maryland and Virginia. And its environmental news has even expanded, syndicated into larger daily publications like *The Baltimore Sun*. And like many newspapers, it has written about the impact of possible budget cuts on environmental regulation. "Chesapeake cleanup funding at risk in federal budget battle," one such headline blared. There's just one catch: the newspaper's chief financial backer is also one of its frequently covered subjects: the U.S. government. For two decades, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has quietly funded the *Bay Journal* as an experiment in educating the public about environmental issues. Between 2005 and 2010 alone, the federal agency has given \$3.5 million to the newspaper's founding organization, the nonprofit Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, in part to help print and distribute the newspaper, according to documents reviewed by the Washington Guardian. The newspaper's editor, Karl Blankenship, says the publication gets about 70 percent of its annual funding from EPA, averaging between \$250,000 and \$350,000 a year. But now the arrangement is coming under some uncomfortable scrutiny, both by federal investigators who question whether taxpayers have been getting their money's worth and by journalism ethics experts who question whether the newspaper has done enough to protect readers from the potential for conflicts of interest.

Conservation Groups, GenOn Energy File Challenges to Pennsylvania Haze Plan

BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT PHILADELPHIA—A group of environmental organizations and the owner of a coal-fired generating station near Pittsburgh on Sept. 11 asked a federal appeals court to review the Environmental Protection Agency's recent approval of Pennsylvania's compliance plan for EPA's regional haze program (*National Parks Conservation Association v. Jackson*, 3d. Cir., No. 12-03534, 9/11/12; *GenOn Power Midwest LP v. EPA*, 3d. Cir., No. 12-03525, 9/11/12). Separate petitions for review of EPA's final action on Pennsylvania's regional haze plan were filed in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit by GenOn Power Midwest LP and by the National Parks Conservation Association, the Sierra Club, and the Clean Air Council. Although the two cases were consolidated by the appeals court for briefing purposes, they involve different issues. The GenOn filing merely seeks to correct a technical error. The environmental groups claim the regional haze state implementation plan (SIP) for Pennsylvania, which EPA approved in July, is inadequate to protect human health and air quality in places such as Brigantine National Wildlife Refuge in New Jersey, Shenandoah National Park in Virginia, and Dolly Sods Wilderness in West

Virginia. EPA's plan requires no pollution controls at any source—zero,” according to Charles McPhedran, an attorney with Earthjustice, a nonprofit law firm representing the environmental organizations. “It is unacceptable to allow large polluters to continue to dirty the air of our communities and our treasured national places.” GenOn, meanwhile, is seeking review of EPA's final action on the Pennsylvania SIP to correct what it maintains are incorrect emission limits for the company's Cheswick Generating Station in Springdale, Pa., GenOn spokeswoman Misty Allen told BNA Sept. 13. EPA acknowledged the apparent error in its response to a comment on the proposed SIP.

Work on PPL power line altering region's landscape

WILKES-BARRE CITIZENS VOICE Pre-construction work on the Susquehanna-Roseland power line project is visible to Scranton area residents who can look to the west and see the brown, defoliated, football field-width path snaking along West Mountain and Bell Mountain. While the path looks as though a giant razor shaved part of the mountain, PPL Corp. has widened its existing right of way. The mountain ridge already hosted a 150-foot-wide clearance for the 230-kilovolt poles that have been there for decades. The electric transmission company cleared an additional 175 feet to accommodate the 500-kilovolt lines so the clearance is now 325 feet wide. The new poles will be an average height of 175 feet. Both lines will run in tandem for the 13.4 miles between substations in Exeter and Blakely, said PPL spokesman Paul Wirth. The company is now using its entire easement, Wirth said, and expects that the cleared portion of 325 feet will be maintained after construction of the poles. Felled trees were offered to the property owners. In many cases, the trees were stacked on the edges of the right of way, Wirth said. While the brown ribbon may appear to have been sprayed with a herbicide, Wirth said no defoliant was used. He said removing the trees exposed the brown forest floor. PPL may use herbicide to keep vegetative growth down during construction. After construction, PPL will seed disturbed ground. But the utility does use herbicide on just about all its power-line easements as maintenance. PPL contractors use several different types of herbicide, including those that go under trade names such as Garlon, Pathway, Escort, Rodeo and Milestone. Wirth said all are approved for this use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and are applied by trained operators. The next stage of the \$560 million project will be seen in October, when contractors will start digging holes for the foundations of the new poles, followed by the pouring of the concrete and a month of curing. In December, the poles will go up on the mountainside.

Gilchrest might seek old seat

SALISBURY DAILY TIMES SALISBURY — Former congressman Wayne Gilchrest and Chestertown physician John LaFerla are emerging as possible opponents to incumbent Andy Harris in the race for Maryland's 1st District U.S. House seat. Following the forced resignation of Wendy Rosen amidst allegations of voter registration fraud, the Maryland Democratic Party is actively looking for a candidate to challenge Harris in November. Democrats originally hoped to replace Rosen's name on the ballot, later learning the deadline for that was Aug. 28 — and their only option would be to field a write-in candidate. LaFerla's name quickly popped up in Democratic conversations, since Rosen narrowly defeated him in the primary. But Gilchrest, who represented the Eastern Shore in Washington for nearly two decades, said Thursday that he, too, might be interested. “Nobody official has asked me to do anything since I've gotten out of Congress, but someone just asked me the other day when he heard the news about Wendy (Rosen),” Gilchrest said. “You begin to think about it.” Gilchrest, who served in Congress as a Republican but has frequently broken party ranks to endorse Democratic candidates, said he has a list of five trips and tasks he wants to complete in the foreseeable future, including another run for Congress. “If I have time to do all that in my remaining years, I'll get it done,” Gilchrest said, adding he doesn't know when he might begin each task. “I never put things in order ... I just pick them out. Actually, in 1988, I was thinking about getting a job in the South Pole and running for Congress, so I did both at the same time, and then the Congress thing came up. I like talking about it. I don't know if I'm going to do it.”

Football fans break recycling record for first game of the season

PENN STATE LIVE UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. -- Penn State football fans and student volunteers set a new record for recycling collected after a home game: the 4,356 bags picked up after the Ohio game on Sept. 1 were nearly triple the average post-game collection of 1,500. At every home game, STATERS (Students Taking Action To Encourage Recycling) hand out blue bags and ask tailgating guests to recycle. These bags are then collected from the 110 acres surrounding Beaver Stadium and greatly speed after game clean-up. Beaver Stadium recycling has already set a high standard for the season, and fans are challenged to do even better over the next six home games. "Thanks to the STATERS' efforts and great cooperation from Penn State fans, the new record demonstrates the University's commitment to sustainability and good citizenship," said Paul Ruskin of Penn State's Office of Physical Plant. "This not only keeps the grounds looking spiffy, but also reduces clean-up time from days to hours - in this case, the entire post-game clean-up operation was completed in three-and-a-half hours. The STATERS proved that doing the right thing for the environment can also be labor-saving and fun." The personal interaction of student recyclers with fans helps to inspire more recycling and contributes to a cleaner stadium ambiance. About 50 percent of the blue bags used for recycling are taken from green-topped Dumpsters and wooden A-frame dispensers placed throughout the tailgating community in a "self-serve" mode, and the rest are personally distributed by STATERS. The collected materials are kept out of the landfill and all the proceeds are donated to the Centre County United Way. "Our student volunteers can be justly proud of their game day accomplishments on the field of green," said Ruskin.

PENNSYLVANIA

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

Editorial: Better air: Let's bring the county code into the 21st century When President Nixon signed the Clean Air Act in 1970, polluters said the cost of compliance would be devastating. Yet 42 years later the nation has reaped both health and economic benefits from the act and from the improvements made to it in 1990. The Environmental Protection Agency says the landmark law's first 20 years prevented 205,000 premature deaths, 672,000 cases of bronchitis, 21,000 cases of heart disease and 18 million child respiratory illnesses. Since 1990, lead in the air has dropped by 92 percent and toxic emissions from industry have been cut by 1.7 million tons a year -- while the gross domestic product grew by 64 percent. The nation still burns coal for electricity, and factory smokestacks still dot the horizon. In other words, industry adjusted to the Clean Air Act, just as it will adjust to Allegheny County's first revision of air pollution guidelines in 24 years. Yet some businesses have objected to the updated county code that was produced after two years of discussion and compromise by the 22-member Air Toxics Guidelines Task Force. In June the panel of industry, environment and regulatory representatives unanimously recommended that the code be adopted by the board of health. By the time the public comment period ended Aug. 13, the county had received 226 written responses on the proposal. More than 200 favored the revision, while 13 from companies and business groups called for rejection or delay. Also, last month the county's Air Quality Citizens Advisory Committee, five of whose seven members are industry attorneys and representatives, voted 5-1 with one abstention against the code. None of that should stop the board of health from approving the plan at its Sept. 19 meeting. The update of the 1988 emissions code is necessary because it has no exposure limits and doesn't account for modern-day chemical emissions and their effects. In fact, industry should appreciate that the revision does not apply to existing pollution sources, but only new or significantly altered sites. Plenty of time has been spent weighing the input of plenty of stakeholders. It's a sign of the plan's moderation that some environmentalists believe it falls short while some corporations say it goes too far. This is a plan the county can live with and breathe with.

Federal agency says natural gas being used more to fuel electrical supplies Though the first hints of autumn are starting to appear in Pittsburgh weather, this past summer was a scorcher that saw increased natural gas power generation trying to keep air conditioners running. That's the takeaway of the latest energy report from the U.S. Energy Information Administration, a federal agency that tracks what sources are used for power generation.

Electrical suppliers can choose to use coal or natural gas for power generation, and increased gas drilling and infrastructure have recently tipped the playing field toward natural gas. Natural gas use for power generation rose this year, averaging 26.3 billion cubic feet per day for the first 8.5 months of 2012, an increase of 24 percent from the same period last year. Much of that increase was seen in the warm summer months, according to Bentek Energy, an energy analytics firm based in Evergreen, Colo. Bentek measures "power burn," or the amount of natural gas used to generate power. The company told the EIA that 17 of the 25 highest days of power burn seen in the last seven years occurred this summer between June 28 and Aug. 9. The Northeast market used about 6 billion cubic feet of natural gas per day, up 23 percent from last year.

Energy jobs forum set for tonight in McKeesport Auberle, a social service agency that helps troubled children and families, will host a free, two-hour Energy Jobs Forum tonight at Auberle in McKeesport. Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald and energy professionals will discuss positions available within the energy industry, including jobs in Marcellus Shale gas drilling. Young people will learn about available jobs, what skills they need to get them and what training they need for specific positions. "This is an opportunity to prepare our kids for jobs with direct input and direction from area businesses in need of workers," Auberle CEO John Lydon said in a news release. "Everyone knows that employment in today's environment can be a challenge, but even more so for at-risk youth. These are well-paying careers that do not require a college education. We have to create these types of concrete opportunities for youth to get in front of employers who are looking to hire. The idea of the forum is simple: bring together potential employees with potential employers and tie it all together with the necessary training." The forum will feature Community College of Allegheny County's Marcellus Initiative, which offers the training required for the positions being discussed at the forum. Mr. Lydon said a lot of the available jobs in the Marcellus Shale gas drilling have starting annual salaries of \$35,000 to \$45,000. Those jobs include roustabouts -- people who set up and do the heavy labor to get a gas drilling site going -- to mechanics and electricians who maintain the site after it's set up.

Texas firm expands Marcellus presence A Fort Worth-based oil and gas firm has purchased a well services company to expand its footprint in the Marcellus Shale drilling formation that lies under several Appalachia states. FTS International, once known as Frac Tech, will grow Marcellus operations with the purchase of Phoenix Well Services LLC, a perforating and completion company based in Burbank, Ohio, the companies announced this week. FTS International purchased the Ohio firm from a company controlled by Palm Ventures LLC, a Greenwich, Conn.-based investment firm. Terms of the sale were not disclosed. The acquisition will create FTSI Wireline, a division of the parent company that will specialize in well completion, which is the process of readying a well to produce gas or oil. FTSI Wireline has offices in Burbank, Ohio, and Delmont, Pa. The new division will focus on operations in Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia and New York, with plans to expand to other shale formations where FTS International operates, the company said. Dan Coffee, who had been the operations manager at Phoenix, will serve as the vice president of FTSI Wireline.

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE REVIEW

Amish notified of mining plans in Indiana County A Latrobe area mining company that is planning a coal operation in the middle of Indiana County's Amish country had to go the extra mile to notify local residents who go without modern conveniences, including televisions. "The company did quite a bit of community outreach. The company delivered notices personally ... posted ones on utility poles ... and had face-to-face talks with the people who are immediately affected," John Poister, a spokesman for the state Department of Environmental Protection, said of AMFIRE Mining Co. LLC's efforts to notify residents in northern Indiana County of its mining plans. AMFIRE Mining, which is based in Derry Township, has scheduled an open house from 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday at the Little Mahoning Bible Conference grounds at 1051 Alabran Road, North Mahoning, to inform residents of its plans to use a room-and-pillar method of underground mining for its Ainsley Mine operations, the state said. The mine will straddle South Mahoning and West Mahoning, and cover almost 62 acres on the surface and 4,367 acres underground, the DEP said. Some of its efforts at community outreach were required under "environmental justice" regulations, said Robert Bottegat, manager of technical services for Alpha Natural Resources Inc.'s AMFIRE Mining subsidiary. An area is designated for environmental justice measures if 20 percent or more of the population

is living below the poverty level, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Bottegal said the company took extra steps to ensure people were aware of the meeting. The environmental protection department is participating in the meeting to discuss the process Amfire must undergo to get its mining permit application approved, Poister said. "We have not begun the process of fully reviewing their application. That's going to take some time," Poister said. AMFIRE anticipates it will take more than a year before any mining permit is approved. The timing for the opening of the mine will depend on market conditions for the metallurgical coal that is burned to make coke that is part of the steelmaking process, Bottegal said. AMFIRE already operates six underground mines in Cambria, Indiana and Jefferson counties, Bottegal said. The coal produced at the mine will be trucked to a railroad line, Bottegal said.

Buffalo Township approves strip mine BUFFALO TOWNSHIP — A strip mine could be coming to the township, and that means blasting will occur. Supervisors on Wednesday night voted, 4-0, to sign on with Amerikohl's request to surface-mine adjacent to Thompson Road near the township's border with Fawn. The mining area will be along a 2,000-foot corridor on the west side of Thompson. Current rules call for no surface mine to be within 100 feet of a township road. Amerikohl, through its representative John Saugrich, asked that the company be allowed to come no closer than 25 feet from Thompson Road. Topsoil and other items would be stored near the road. The Butler-based company must build a four-foot berm along the west side of the road, erect an orange, plastic barrier fence and post "No trespassing" signs prominently. Amerikohl will apply to the state Department of Environmental Protection for a mining permit. Blasting would take place. Neighbors would be notified and roads would be closed for up to five minutes. Under DEP rules, any resident of the affected area can request a public hearing. No target date to start the project was determined. No one who attended Wednesday's meeting voiced opposition to the project.

SCRANTON TIMES-TRIBUNE

Abington sewer authority to spend \$17M to comply with EPA mandate (Thursday) SOUTH ABINGTON TWP. - The Abington Regional Wastewater Authority will spend \$17 million, or 50 percent of its expected \$34 million project, to reduce the plant's discharges of phosphates and nitrogen. Part of the project to upgrade and expand the sewage treatment plant that serves South Abington Twp., Clarks Summit and Clarks Green includes plans to reduce the amount of phosphates and nitrogen in treated wastewater that make their way to the Chesapeake Bay, where it can harm wildlife and plants. "We needed to address this, and though it's costly, it's for the benefit of the environment," board member Stephen Evers said at a meeting Wednesday night. The Environmental Protection Agency has required sewage treatment plants in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to reduce levels of phosphates and nitrogen. To comply with the new limits, part of the wastewater authority's project will use a process in which bacteria use the oxygen from phosphates and nutrients in sewage as their energy source, thus reducing the harmful content of the effluent, sewer authority Executive Director Bob Davis said. "This a step we need to make to come into compliance with the EPA's mandate," Mr. Davis said. "Our levels need to be under the set limits." Also at the meeting Wednesday, authority members discussed the timeline for the project. They plan to seek bids for the construction as early as Nov. 1. In all, the construction will take place in nine phases so the plant can continue to operate as the expansion and upgrades are taking place. Construction must be finished by October 2015, under requirements by the EPA and the state Department of Environmental Protection, according to Mr. Davis. "We have to maintain operation of all of the existing process - from pumping, to biosolids, to settling, to disinfections," consulting environmental engineer James Elliot said. "Either the existing processes, or the new process have to be maintained through the entire 30-month project."

READING EAGLE

Ordinance would limit outdoor burning The Lower Alsace Township supervisors are moving forward with changes to the township burning ordinance. Supervisor James Oswald said Wednesday that the township wanted to take a closer look at the ordinance because "there were some people that were less than considerate to their neighbors with their burning." As amended, the ordinance would ban the burning of household trash and any materials that the township requires to be recycled. It also would require a permit for fires for ceremonial purposes, firefighter

training or "any fire set for the prevention and/or control of disease of pests, rats, snakes, bees, etc."

WILKES-BARRE CITIZENS VOICE

Work on PPL power line altering region's landscape Pre-construction work on the Susquehanna-Roseland power line project is visible to Scranton area residents who can look to the west and see the brown, defoliated, football field-width path snaking along West Mountain and Bell Mountain. While the path looks as though a giant razor shaved part of the mountain, PPL Corp. has widened its existing right of way. The mountain ridge already hosted a 150-foot-wide clearance for the 230-kilovolt poles that have been there for decades. The electric transmission company cleared an additional 175 feet to accommodate the 500-kilovolt lines so the clearance is now 325 feet wide. The new poles will be an average height of 175 feet. Both lines will run in tandem for the 13.4 miles between substations in Exeter and Blakely, said PPL spokesman Paul Wirth. The company is now using its entire easement, Wirth said, and expects that the cleared portion of 325 feet will be maintained after construction of the poles. Felled trees were offered to the property owners. In many cases, the trees were stacked on the edges of the right of way, Wirth said. While the brown ribbon may appear to have been sprayed with a herbicide, Wirth said no defoliant was used. He said removing the trees exposed the brown forest floor. PPL may use herbicide to keep vegetative growth down during construction. After construction, PPL will seed disturbed ground. But the utility does use herbicide on just about all its power-line easements as maintenance. PPL contractors use several different types of herbicide, including those that go under trade names such as Garlon, Pathway, Escort, Rodeo and Milestone. Wirth said all are approved for this use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and are applied by trained operators. The next stage of the \$560 million project will be seen in October, when contractors will start digging holes for the foundations of the new poles, followed by the pouring of the concrete and a month of curing. In December, the poles will go up on the mountainside.

POTTSVILLE REPUBLICAN HERALD

Saint Clair to install additional fuel pumps SAINT CLAIR - The Saint Clair Area school board approved a change order to install additional fuel pumps in the school for about \$10,000 at its monthly meeting. The school is undergoing a construction project for about \$11.6 million. "It's a complete renovation of the existing building and it's a new addition with 25 parking spaces, eight new classrooms and a play yard on the roof," Superintendent Kendy Hinkel said. Completion is scheduled for June 2013. The pumps are needed because the fuel oil can't get to where it needs to go because the pipes are at a higher elevation than planned. This resulted in the floor in the cafeteria not having to be torn up, Hinkel said. The pipes were going to be placed under the floor originally, she said. However, the district will see a substantial saving because the floor is not being removed. This all came about because there were some problems with that side of the building and a soil sample expert being called. Hinkel did not elaborate on those problems. Hinkel thought two additional pumps were needed. She said those pumps could be installed "within the next couple of weeks." Most likely, they would go in the basement and a storage room near the cafeteria, she said. In other news, the board accepted the resignation of the girls' seventh- and eighth-grade basketball coach, Kevin Cresswell. Hinkel said after the meeting that Cresswell had work conflicts. The board voted to approve William Reed, who has been a volunteer and worked closely with Cresswell, as coach for the 2012-13 season.

PENN STATE LIVE

Football fans break recycling record for first game of the season UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. -- Penn State football fans and student volunteers set a new record for recycling collected after a home game: the 4,356 bags picked up after the Ohio game on Sept. 1 were nearly triple the average post-game collection of 1,500. At every home game, STATERS (Students Taking Action To Encourage Recycling) hand out blue bags and ask tailgating guests to recycle. These bags are then collected from the 110 acres surrounding Beaver Stadium and greatly speed after game clean-up. Beaver Stadium recycling has already set a high standard for the season, and fans are challenged to do even better over the next six home games. "Thanks to the STATERS' efforts and great cooperation from Penn State fans, the new record demonstrates the University's commitment to sustainability and good citizenship," said Paul Ruskin of Penn State's Office of Physical Plant. "This not only keeps the grounds looking spiffy, but also reduces

clean-up time from days to hours -- in this case, the entire post-game clean-up operation was completed in three-and-a-half hours. The STATERs proved that doing the right thing for the environment can also be labor-saving and fun." The personal interaction of student recyclers with fans helps to inspire more recycling and contributes to a cleaner stadium ambiance. About 50 percent of the blue bags used for recycling are taken from green-topped Dumpsters and wooden A-frame dispensers placed throughout the tailgating community in a "self-serve" mode, and the rest are personally distributed by STATERs. The collected materials are kept out of the landfill and all the proceeds are donated to the Centre County United Way. "Our student volunteers can be justly proud of their game day accomplishments on the field of green," said Ruskin.

WILLIAMSPORT SUN GAZETTE

DEP to hold gas vehicle seminar at local college The state Department of Environmental Protection will hold a natural gas vehicle seminar Oct. 17 at Pennsylvania College of Technology. It is among several meetings being held statewide to help municipal and commercial fleet owners make informed decisions about converting their fleets to compressed natural gas and liquefied natural gas. Revenue from the impact fees assessed on unconventional wells is to be used to promote the fleet conversions. Act 13 of 2012 authorized DEP to develop and implement a Natural Gas Energy Development Program to distribute up to \$20 million in grants over the next three years to help pay for the incremental purchase and conversion costs of natural gas fleet vehicles. To register or to see a complete list of seminar dates and confirmed locations, go to www.dep.state.pa.us.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WASHINGTON POST

Blog: Tim Kaine touts energy policy in new ad Virginians finally have something new in senatorial TV advertising: a helicopter ride. Former Democratic governor Timothy M. Kaine appears in a chopper, hovering over the Virginia Hybrid Energy Coal plant, in a new ad touting what he calls his "comprehensive energy strategy." "This state-of-the-art coal plant in Southwest Virginia, where my wife's from, created 2,500 new jobs," Kaine says in the ad, which was titled "Unleashed" and launched Thursday. "As governor, I supported its construction. I also support off-shore energy, conservation and innovative investment in wind and solar, which together employ more than 66,000 Virginians. That's what I call unleashing our energy potential." Kaine's opponent, former Republican senator and governor George Allen, countered with a news release headlined, "Kaine 'Unleashed' Whopper Of An Ad." "The fact is the Wise County plant could not be opened under the job-destroying EPA regulations that Tim Kaine's liberal environmentalist allies cheer while he stands silent," Allen's release said. The release also quotes Del. Terry Kilgore (R-Scott), who challenged Kaine's claim that he had supported the plant as governor. "I have been involved in the Dominion Clean Coal plant in Wise since its inception and it's news to me that Tim Kaine or his administration were strong advocates in making this a reality," Kilgore is quoted saying. "In fact we had to fight his boards to get it permitted. As President Obama's 'unabashed' supporter he will be fighting for the EPA as they try to carry out cap and trade through new regulations."

Larry Gibson, W. Va. activist who fought mountain mining, dies at 66 Larry Gibson, an unlikely activist who fought West Virginia's powerful coal interests to preserve a mountain that had been his family's home for generations, died Sept. 9 at a hospital in Charleston, W.Va. He had a heart attack while working at his family's property on Kayford Mountain in Raleigh County, W.Va., his daughter, Victoria Gibson, said. He was 66. Mr. Gibson was best known for his tireless and often courageous opposition to a mining practice called mountaintop removal. After being away from West Virginia for many years, he returned to Kayford Mountain in 1986 and discovered a landscape that was beginning to change beyond recognition. Where there had once been verdant mountain ridges, Mr. Gibson now saw desolate stretches of land where mining companies had dynamited the mountaintops to expose seams of coal within. Trees and rocks had been bulldozed into valleys and streams below. "Growing up here was an adventure every day," he said in an online video made for Earthjustice, a nonprofit legal organization formerly known as the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund. "I played with my pet bobcat, my fox, my

hawk.”

WASHINGTON GUARDIAN

Investigation questions EPA money spent to fund newspaper Once a month, a free print publication gets delivered to mailboxes, coffee shops and libraries across the Mid-Atlantic with the latest news about how the government and private sector are trying to protect one of America’s natural crown jewels: the Chesapeake Bay. The *Chesapeake Bay Journal* looks like any other newspaper, its print and Web editions having become monthly fixtures along the eastern shores of Maryland and Virginia. And its environmental news has even expanded, syndicated into larger daily publications like *The Baltimore Sun*. And like many newspapers, it has written about the impact of possible budget cuts on environmental regulation. “Chesapeake cleanup funding at risk in federal budget battle,” one such headline blared. There’s just one catch: the newspaper’s chief financial backer is also one of its frequently covered subjects: the U.S. government. For two decades, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has quietly funded the *Bay Journal* as an experiment in educating the public about environmental issues. Between 2005 and 2010 alone, the federal agency has given \$3.5 million to the newspaper’s founding organization, the nonprofit Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, in part to help print and distribute the newspaper, according to documents reviewed by the Washington Guardian. The newspaper’s editor, Karl Blankenship, says the publication gets about 70 percent of its annual funding from EPA, averaging between \$250,000 and \$350,000 a year. But now the arrangement is coming under some uncomfortable scrutiny, both by federal investigators who question whether taxpayers have been getting their money’s worth and by journalism ethics experts who question whether the newspaper has done enough to protect readers from the potential for conflicts of interest.

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL

DuPont recognized as sustainability leader in Dow Jones index The DuPont Co. has been named to the 2012 North America Dow Jones Sustainability Index. The index measures performance of gl...

DELAWARE CAPE GAZETTE

UD’s Coast Day is Checking in on Our Coast Oct. 7 The University of Delaware’s festive Coast Day returns for a 36th year from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 7. Beach enthusiasts, seafood lovers and anyone curious about the wonders of the sea can visit the Hugh R. Sharp Campus in Lewes on Coast Day to learn about the state’s rich marine resources. This year’s theme, Checking in on Our Coast, will highlight how UD scientists, staff and students are improving understanding of ocean environments and serving coastal communities. Coast Day attendees can interact with researchers, tour ships, try hands-on activities and attend presentations on a range of topics. At a special exhibit inside the Cannon Laboratory, visitors can check out various ways that scientists investigate ocean waters from the deep sea to the coastal marshes. A hydrothermal vent and underwater robot will be on display, along with interactive activities to explore. Children can dress up as marine scientists and consider the many career options related to ocean science.

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON GAZETTE

Patriot selenium deal falls through CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- A deal that might have helped bankrupt Patriot Coal

manage its huge liability for cleaning up selenium pollution from mountaintop removal mining operations has fallen through, federal court records have revealed. Lawyers for Patriot and the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition told U.S. District Judge Robert C. Chambers on Wednesday that "there had been a breakdown in negotiations" toward finalizing their agreement. Lawyers briefed the judge on their impasse during a status conference held by telephone call Wednesday afternoon, court records show. The development comes about a month after lawyers for Patriot and environmental groups told Chambers they had reached an "agreement in principle" concerning the company's massive liability for treating selenium runoff from mountaintop removal complexes in Southern West Virginia. A deal was viewed as a way to help Patriot better structure how it covers "hundreds of millions of dollars" -- by one estimate \$440 million -- in outstanding liability for selenium cleanup costs. In July, St. Louis-based Patriot filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy and its reorganization efforts have prompted major concerns from the United Mine Workers that the company will try to use the process to avoid an estimated \$1.3 billion in liability for retiree pensions and health-care benefits. UMW officials say that Patriot was "created to fail," as a way for Peabody Coal and Arch Coal, the two companies from which Patriot was formed, to ditch their own union pension and health-care liabilities. Five years ago, Peabody formed Patriot as a spin-off company where Peabody tucked union mines in West Virginia and the Midwest, along with pension and health-care obligations for union retirees. Patriot later bought another company, Magnum Coal, which had been similarly spin-off by Arch Coal when it got rid of most of its Appalachian operations and their related pension and health-care liabilities. Patriot employs about 2,000 active union members in West Virginia and Kentucky, and the company is currently responsible for more than 10,000 retirees and another 10,000 dependents, most of them in West Virginia, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky and Ohio.

Coal jobs could rebound after 2020, report says CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Appalachian coal jobs are expected to decline over the next dozen years, but could rebound and even increase after 2020 as mine production stabilizes at lower levels, according to a new analysis by the West Virginia Center for Budget and Policy. Sean O'Leary, a policy analyst at the center, examined coal production forecasts, productivity projections and employment data for the analysis, published Thursday on the organization's website. The report provides a new twist in the ongoing discussion about the future of Southern West Virginia's coal industry, which is facing intense competition from natural gas, a decline in quality reserves, and pressures from new regulations. O'Leary emphasized that there's no way to know for sure if the projections are right, but that state leaders should be looking closely and preparing for changes in the industry. "The coal industry in West Virginia, particularly Southern West Virginia, will be dramatically changing, and soon," O'Leary wrote. "That's why it is so important to ask questions like, 'What is the effect on employment?' and prepare for that transition." The center has, for example, proposed that the state form a "coal-mining transition task force" to help communities look for viable ways to ease the possible impacts and search for economic alternatives. The organization has also been promoting the idea for an increase in coal and natural gas taxes to form a fund dedicated to funding education and infrastructure improvements that would help with an economic transition. Forecasts from the U.S. Department of Energy show steep declines over the next decade in coal production from Appalachia, especially the Central Appalachian area that includes Southern West Virginia and Eastern Kentucky. In part, those declines are expected to occur because of a decline in coal-mining productivity driven at least partially by the mining-out of high-quality and easy-to-get reserves. O'Leary's analysis suggests a bright spot from that trend could be that reduced productivity means companies will need more miners to produce the same -- or perhaps even lower -- amounts of coal. O'Leary calculated one estimate that showed Central Appalachian coal jobs declining from 35,400 in 2010 to a low of 25,190 in 2020, but then rebounding to 45,400 by 2035.

Blog: Will production decline bring more coal jobs? The good folks over at the West Virginia Center for Budget and Policy have just posted a fascinating piece by Sean O'Leary that looks at how the coming decline in Appalachian coal production might affect jobs in the industry. Here's how it starts:

Blog: Judge refuses to block Alpha mine during appeal U.S. District Judge Robert C. Chambers has just issued this order, which denies a request from the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition and other groups for an injunction to block Alpha Natural Resources subsidiary Highland Mining's Reylas Surface Mine permit while those citizen

groups appeal a ruling allowing the mine to proceed. Judge Chambers ruled that the citizen groups are unlikely to succeed on the permits on their appeal, meaning they didn't meet the legal test to obtain such an injunction (we went through some of the legal discussions about all of this in a previous post [here](#)). The judge did, however, extended his previous stay of the mining for 14 days, to give the citizen groups time to try to convince the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to grant an injunction while a full appeal is heard.

WEST VIRGINIA PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Expert speaks on America's energy future America's Energy Future? Will it include coal? An expert will speak on that subject tonight in Huntington. Dr. J. Winston Porter managed the environmental department at the Bechtel Corporation and later worked as an assistant administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In his talk, Dr. Porter will analyze the nation's energy landscape. He spoke to us from his office in Savannah, Georgia. Dr. J. Winston Porter, a noted leader in environmental and management consulting will speak tonight at 7 p.m. at the Ponderosa Restaurant in Huntington.

Pilot female farmer training program takes off Many farm and ranch women all over the United States are hearing about an educational program called Annie's Project. Its mission is to empower women to be better farm business partners through networks and by managing and organizing critical information. West Virginia is the 33rd state to implement the project.

CONSOL Energy coal miner dies in mining accident Consol Energy coal miner William Edward Mock died after a mining roof fall accident on Thursday.

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE SUN

Fair celebrates Baltimore's growing urban farming scene 2nd annual event features locally grown food, games, music & demonstrations. For those few who somehow haven't heard already, it's possible to get down on the farm in Baltimore without ever leaving the city limits.

BGE officials voice support for some burying of power lines Utility castigated for failing to provide more outage information to customers, first responders. Utility castigated for failing to provide more outage information to customers, first responders

SALISBURY DAILY TIMES

Gilchrest might seek old seat SALISBURY — Former congressman Wayne Gilchrest and Chestertown physician John LaFerla are emerging as possible opponents to incumbent Andy Harris in the race for Maryland's 1st District U.S. House seat. Following the forced resignation of Wendy Rosen amidst allegations of voter registration fraud, the Maryland Democratic Party is actively looking for a candidate to challenge Harris in November. Democrats originally hoped to replace Rosen's name on the ballot, later learning the deadline for that was Aug. 28 — and their only option would be to field a write-in candidate. LaFerla's name quickly popped up in Democratic conversations, since Rosen narrowly defeated him in the primary. But Gilchrest, who represented the Eastern Shore in Washington for nearly two decades, said Thursday that he, too, might be interested. "Nobody official has asked me to do anything since I've gotten out of Congress, but someone just asked me the other day when he heard the news about Wendy (Rosen)," Gilchrest said. "You begin to think about it." Gilchrest, who served in Congress as a Republican but has frequently broken party ranks to endorse Democratic candidates, said he has a list of five trips and tasks he wants to complete in the foreseeable future, including another run for Congress. "If I have time to do all that in my

remaining years, I'll get it done," Gilchrest said, adding he doesn't know when he might begin each task. "I never put things in order ... I just pick them out. Actually, in 1988, I was thinking about getting a job in the South Pole and running for Congress, so I did both at the same time, and then the Congress thing came up. I like talking about it. I don't know if I'm going to do it."

HAGERSTOWN HERALD MAIL

Rockin' at River Bottom concert event to raise funds for water quality upgrade

WILLIAMSPORT — The Potomac River has forever been the life vein of the residents of Williamsport. Those involved in the Rockin' at River Bottom concert hope the river will continue to be a place where locals can play. Rockin' at River Bottom will be Saturday, Sept. 15, at River Bottom Park in Williamsport. Gates open at 9 a.m., with the first of five bands going on at noon. Music ends at 8:50 p.m. Councilman Bill G. Green, who is also coordinator for the event, said there's been a lot of talk about the event hosting a beer garden, which he said loses the focus on the event itself — to help foot the bill for a new state Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) to help protect the Chesapeake Bay. Washington County municipalities are expected to pay \$1.1 billion over the next 13 years in stormwater, wastewater and septic upgrades. Green said Williamsport's share will be \$11.7 million.

He said they're hoping that the money raised from the event can help offset the cost. Green had told the council in July that the event could take in \$60,000 to \$70,000. Tickets cost \$10 in advance; \$15 at the door. "We wanted to do some kind of rock festival," Green said.

He said he and Donnie Stotemyer, town clerk and treasurer, had knocked around the idea of hosting a rock concert for a while. Green said he knew a lot of bands through his work with local events such as Bike Night and knew they could get a line-up together. So when the Watershed Implementation Plan price tag was discussed, Green and Stotemyer decided they wanted to have the rock concert to benefit the communities. Green said they thought this would be the right type of event to help the community. The two headliners are Los Angeles-based Rhino Bucket and Charm City Devils from the Baltimore area. Also playing are Calisus, Crush Theory and The Edmund Allan Brown Band.

VIRGINIA

NORFOLK VIRGINIAN PILOT

Seahorse find inspires more searching in Lafayette River NORFOLK -- Scientists this summer found a surprise living at the bottom of the Lafayette River: a seahorse. The discovery sparked curiosity and excitement among those who follow the restoration of the waterway, a branch of the industrial Elizabeth River, and caused researchers to suggest that this little creature may signal something big. "You wouldn't expect to see seahorses in a highly polluted system, since they like clean water," said Walter Priest, a scientist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, based in Gloucester Point. "To see one here, it's one of those charismatic things. It really is a harbinger of good things." Priest, who grew up on the Lafayette, was speaking this week from the back of a science boat owned by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. He and other researchers were out Tuesday dragging a weighted net along the muddy river bottom, taking inventory of aquatic life they retrieved from a waterway once given up for dead. They also were hoping to find another seahorse or two. After the first seahorse was discovered at the mouth of the Lafayette on July 7, not far from Norfolk International Terminals, photos and a brief summary were posted on a website for the Elizabeth River Project, a local environmental group. People went nuts. "I've heard more public comment on that one posting than anything," said Joe Rieger, senior scientist with the advocacy group, based in Portsmouth. "It's just one of those species that people really relate to. It creates immediate interest." Rieger recalled seeing just one other seahorse in the Elizabeth River. That one was caught during a trawling survey near Waterside in downtown Norfolk about two years ago. "We couldn't believe it," he said. "A seahorse? Really?" According to the Chesapeake Bay Program office, which coordinates state and federal efforts at cleaning up the

troubled estuary, seahorses can be found in the middle and lower parts of the Bay. Among the many variety of seahorses in the world, only one species calls the Bay home: the lined seahorse, named for the linear ridges of yellow and gold that ring its body. These multicolored creatures typically attach themselves to eel grass beds in the Bay by curling their tails around swaying grass stalks. They bob in the water like anchored boats and suck up particles of food that pass by with their vacuum-like snouts.

FARMVILLE HERALD

DEQ remains vigilant Water Supply Problems Still Possible. FARMVILLE - Despite increased rain and improved stream flow, "ground water levels continued to decline, however, in many areas," according to the Department of Environmental Quality's September 7 Drought Status Report. The report also warns "a very warm, dry September could enhance any risk of developing water supply problems-especially in well-fed systems." DEQ has retained the Drought Warning status for the Appomattox River Basin and its communities, including Farmville, Buckingham, Cumberland and Prince Edward. DEQ notes that the September 4 U.S. Drought Monitor web pages "indicate that abnormally dry conditions exist across approximately 53 percent of the state. As for DEQ's August 14 Drought Warning Advisory for the Appomattox River Basin, the department's September 7 update notes that water levels in Lake Chesdin-the basin's main public water supply source-"dropped to greater than four feet below its full pool level during August." The above average rains that concluded August and continued in early September helped regain a foot of Lake Chesdin's water. "The water level report for September 7 was 36 inches below full pool level," the DEQ report states. Though one might have thought the rainfall would have seen the Drought Warning Advisory lifted, DEQ's Drought Management Task Force recommended during its monthly meeting on September 6 to continue these advisories and closely monitor conditions during the month.

As DEQ's Director of Water Supply, Scott Kudlas, told The Herald this week, "While rainfall deficits and stream flow has improved due to recent rainfall, groundwater levels continue to cause stream flow to recede quickly after a storm." And, Kudlas added, "we are also waiting for water supply storage to improve basin-wide." The communities depending in Lake Chesdin for their water supply continue under mandatory water restrictions, according to the September 7 DEQ report. The report also points out that though the hurricane season has not been a quiet one, tropical systems "have brought very little moisture to Virginia. Forecasts still indicate expectations of a near normal season overall. Nonetheless, we are in the most active period of hurricane season and even weak and decaying remnants of these storms can be sufficient to bring heavy rains over large areas." DEQ's next update will be in the October.

Briefing on town wells FARMVILLE - The Town of Farmville's reliance on wells in a drought emergency should not detrimentally affect residential wells outside the Town's limits, according to a Powhatan well driller. The Town has greatly increased the capacity of two wells at the water treatment plant to a combined total of 777,600 gallons per day, if the plant were operated 24 hours a day-it is not-or more than four times their previous output. One of the wells is now 501 feet deep, and increased from six inches to 10 inches wide, the other nearly 300 feet deep. More wells may also be drilled by the Town for use in case of severe drought, to supplement the Appomattox River. Robert Royal, president and operator of Royal Pump and Well, founded in 1950, performed the capacity-expanding work on the Town's emergency water supply wells and briefed Town Council during its September meeting Wednesday night. As for any concerns of homeowners relying on wells outside the Town's limits, Royal said he doesn't believe they will be negatively affected. "This water was encountered, the majority, much deeper than the average residential well has been drilled in this area," Royal said, adding, "your water treatment plant is not sitting right in the center of a subdivision where you have 40 or 50 other wells concentrated within a quarter, half or one-mile radius. It's far less populated than that. "The impact, if any-and I'm not a hydro-geologist-but I see very low, if any, impact you have to be concerned with," he said. "And the area of re-charge, which means where rain falls and filters through the earth to repopulate the fractures or breaks in the rock to store up and contain this high yield (of water), there's very little competition for that recharge," Royal, who has worked in the well business for 41 years, told council members. "So that water there is waiting for your use when you have an emergency situation." Royal told Town Council that the survey report the Town is receiving proposals on from a hydro-geologist "can better speak to that but there's already been comments made by them that these two locations were in very favorable

locations as far as recharge and low impact on neighboring properties..." Royal addressed the notion and concern, raised by council member Dr. Edward I. Gordon, who spoke of the Town drilling "into a body of water, a lake that's down in the earth and I think the fear is that if you go into that will, if we put other wells in, will we be pumping into the same one or different ones and that's what the study is all about, is that correct, to make sure that they're different ones, or if they're the same one would it be able to handle additional (withdrawal of water through the wells)," Dr. Gordon said.

Drought warning remains FARMVILLE - Despite plentiful rainfall in late August and early September, Virginia's Department of Environmental Quality has not rescinded its Drought Warning declaration for the Appomattox River basin, which includes Farmville, Prince Edward, Buckingham and Cumberland. "Yes, it is still in effect," DEQ's Director of Water Supply Scott Kudlas informed The Herald on Monday evening. "While rainfall deficits and stream flow has improved due to recent rainfall," he emailed from a conference in Washington, D.C. in response to the newspaper's query, "groundwater levels continue to cause stream flow to recede quickly after a storm. "We are also waiting," Kudlas explained, "for water supply storage to improve basin-wide." August rainfall topped eight inches in Farmville, twice the month's yearly average, and September has been sodden, redeeming fields and lawns from their withering. But, DEQ wonders, is the rain solely due to one-time tropical effects or is long-term water level healing underway? Other localities and public water suppliers included in the Drought Warning area are the counties of Amelia, Appomattox, Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Nottoway, Powhatan and Prince George, and the towns of Appomattox, Blackstone, Burkeville and Crewe. Voluntary water conservation activities remain the order of the day but DEQ states that "drought warning responses are required when the onset of a significant drought event is imminent. Water conservation and contingency plans that were prepared during the drought watch stage should be implemented." The layman's perspective is that a significant drought event no longer seems imminent, or even likely, given the amount of rainfall. DEQ will continue to monitor and evaluate the situation, and has generally been issuing updates in mid-month.

DANVILLER REGISTER AND BEE

Poll: Uranium mining ban should remain in place The majority of Danville and Pittsylvania County residents do not want to see the state ban on uranium mining lifted. That was the bottom-line result of a poll taken by Virginia Commonwealth University's Survey and Evaluation Laboratory for the Alliance for Progress in Southern Virginia, which was released at a news conference in downtown Danville on Thursday. More than 550 Danville and Pittsylvania County residents participated in the poll. Jay Poole, a spokesperson for the alliance, said he was surprised by two things the survey revealed: the number of people who were aware of the issue, and the number of people who had already formed an opinion on the issue. "The overwhelming margin of support in opposition to the proposed uranium mine in Pittsylvania County was striking," Poole said. Although 54 percent of respondents said they thought a mine might help the local economy, they clearly felt that was offset by potential risks, with 53 percent saying they do not want uranium mining in their backyards, compared to 29 percent who support the idea of a uranium mine at Coles Hill near Chatham. When asked how they thought agriculture and the wood products industry would be affected, 63 percent said they felt it would be negatively impacted.

Safe uranium mining processes explained at workshop CHATHAM -- While not taking a specific position, a mining and wastewater engineer gave insight Thursday night into safety issues surrounding the hotly debated topic of uranium. The Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League sponsored "Local and Site-Specific Factors: Uranium Mining and Milling at Coles Hill" at the Olde Dominion Agricultural Foundation in Chatham. The workshop, which drew about 50 participants, was led by Val Green, a mining and wastewater engineer who is also a farmer in South Carolina. He said the workshop was set up based on a course he used to teach to the Bureau of Mines. "I'm not going to take a position on whether Virginia ought to have uranium mining — that's your job," Green said. "If we don't grow something, we have to mine it ... the fuel that supplies a power plant is uranium, and the fuel that powers electricity has to come from somewhere." It's not just getting the ore out of the ground that can create problems, Green said. Processing the ore involves crushing it and using chemicals to separate the ore from the material around it. "You're going to have dust and noise galore," Green said. Green explained the basic process of mining uranium, from scraping off the topsoil, which will be saved and used again in the reclamation process when

the mining is done, to processes for extracting the uranium. Green said there are no federal mining laws, but Virginia does have some — though he said it is “pretty weak” and doesn’t completely address mining waste. “If the ban is lifted, you want to use existing solid waste laws and apply it to uranium mining,” Green said. Eloise Nenan asked if Virginia’s unpredictable weather — which includes hurricanes, floods and tornados — could be a danger to the containment of contaminants. Green said the sites can be designed to withstand many things, including a 3.1 earthquake. He did say, however, that nothing could protect it from a 7.5 earthquake. “Then the Earth really moves, and it’s Katy-bar-the-door time,” Green said. Green said some other metals released during uranium mining can be as harmful as the affects of uranium. If there is any sulfur, it will mix with the hydrogen in water and become sulfuric acid. If that gets into water, it kills everything, he said, noting that a gold mine in Montana has leaked sulfuric acid into a stream and killed everything in the creek and on its banks for 100 miles.

MISCELLANEOUS

BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT

Conservation Groups, GenOn Energy File Challenges to Pennsylvania Haze Plan PHILADELPHIA—A group of environmental organizations and the owner of a coal-fired generating station near Pittsburgh on Sept. 11 asked a federal appeals court to review the Environmental Protection Agency's recent approval of Pennsylvania's compliance plan for EPA's regional haze program (National Parks Conservation Association v. Jackson, 3d. Cir., No. 12-03534, 9/11/12; GenOn Power Midwest LP v. EPA, 3d. Cir., No. 12-03525, 9/11/12). Separate petitions for review of EPA's final action on Pennsylvania's regional haze plan were filed in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit by GenOn Power Midwest LP and by the National Parks Conservation Association, the Sierra Club, and the Clean Air Council. Although the two cases were consolidated by the appeals court for briefing purposes, they involve different issues. The GenOn filing merely seeks to correct a technical error.

The environmental groups claim the regional haze state implementation plan (SIP) for Pennsylvania, which EPA approved in July, is inadequate to protect human health and air quality in places such as Brigantine National Wildlife Refuge in New Jersey, Shenandoah National Park in Virginia, and Dolly Sods Wilderness in West Virginia. EPA's plan requires no pollution controls at any source—zero,” according to Charles McPhedran, an attorney with Earthjustice, a nonprofit law firm representing the environmental organizations. “It is unacceptable to allow large polluters to continue to dirty the air of our communities and our treasured national places.” GenOn, meanwhile, is seeking review of EPA's final action on the Pennsylvania SIP to correct what it maintains are incorrect emission limits for the company's Cheswick Generating Station in Springdale, Pa., GenOn spokeswoman Misty Allen told BNA Sept. 13. EPA acknowledged the apparent error in its response to a comment on the proposed SIP.

D.C. Circuit Agrees to Suspend Case on Utility Mercury Limits The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit puts a temporary stop to litigation over EPA's mercury and air toxics standards for new power plants. The court grants EPA's request to hold the case in abeyance while the agency completes an administrative reconsideration of the standards. Utilities claim the mercury limits are so low that monitoring is infeasible.

USDA Awards \$73 Million in Loans, Grants To Upgrade Rural Water, Wastewater Systems Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack Sept. 13 announced \$54 million in loans and \$19 million in grants to upgrade, repair, and expand wastewater and drinking water treatment plants and associated sewer systems in 16 states. The grants and loans will be disbursed by the USDA Rural Development's Rural Utilities Service and be directed to communities with fewer than 10,000 people. Funding has been provided for projects, which range from upgrading a wastewater treatment plant in Dudley, Mo., and extending public water service in the Lincoln district in West Virginia to building a drinking water collection system in Volney, N.Y., and improving the sanitary sewer collection and water distribution system in Hanley Falls, Minn.

According to USDA, communities in the following states were selected for funding: Arkansas, California, Idaho,

Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia. "These improvements to rural water infrastructure will provide reliable access to clean water, improving public health," Vilsack said in a statement. He added that the Obama administration is "working to support creation of a vibrant, sustainable rural America and clean water is a basic necessity for the health and economic growth of our rural communities." Since 2009, the Rural Utilities Service has provided more than \$8.1 billion in the form of direct loans, grants, and loan guarantees to assist rural communities with building modern, updated water and waste water capacity.

Romney's 'Energy Independence' Plan Means All-Out Fossil Fuel Development Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney is asking voters to embrace his plan for achieving "North American energy independence" by 2020 and to abandon President Obama's four-year, government-led effort to build a clean-energy economy. Romney is doubling down by offering a supply-side program that calls for greater fossil fuel production while opposing demand-side programs such as higher fuel economy standards and further reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Both Romney and Obama have been short on specifics so far, but it is clear that the 2012 presidential election represents the starkest contrast in years on energy policy—far different from the 2008 cycle in which then-candidate Obama and Republican challenger John McCain both offered their own mandatory, economywide cap-and-trade proposals to limit greenhouse gas emissions, and both pledged to reduce the nation's dependency on oil. Romney's energy independence plan draws heavily on advice from Oklahoma City oilman Harold Hamm, who developed the prolific Bakken Formation shale oil field in North Dakota and who heads Romney's energy policy team, and from an extremely bullish report by Citigroup analysts—Energy 2020: North America, the New Middle East?

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Obama rep pledges further Great Lakes restoration TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. - President Barack Obama, if re-elected, would continue a program that has pumped more than \$1 billion into Great Lakes protection during his first term, although it's uncertain how much money will be available in the future, a spokeswoman said Thursday. Carol Browner, the president's former energy and climate adviser and a previous Environmental Protection Agency chief, also said a second Obama administration would push ahead with efforts to prevent Asian carp from reaching the Great Lakes. But she said it was too early to take a position on placing barriers in Chicago-area waterways to block the carp's path to Lake Michigan, a step favored by most states in the Great Lakes region but opposed by Illinois and local business groups. "The president does take his responsibilities toward the Great Lakes very seriously," Browner said during a candidates' forum that wrapped up the annual Great Lakes Restoration Conference in Cleveland. More than 600 environmental activists, business leaders and government officials were registered to attend. Republican challenger Mitt Romney's campaign did not send a representative to the forum, although organizers said earlier this week that both sides had been invited and would take part. Spokesman Christopher Maloney said in an email that scheduling conflicts prevented the Romney campaign from participating. He said Romney would continue "restoration efforts" if elected but offered no details. Obama's administration kicked off the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative in 2009 to deal with longstanding problems that scientists say are causing ecological damage and harming the region's economy. The lakes make up 95 percent of the nation's surface freshwater and supply more than 30 million people with drinking water. Congress has approved Obama's requests totaling more than \$1 billion for the program. It has funded hundreds of projects to fight invasive species, restore wildlife habitat, clean up toxic hot spots and prevent runoff that causes harmful algae blooms. But supporters say more is needed. Obama has pledged to fund the initiative at least through 2014, and presidential counselor Pete Rouse said in February the administration was "interested in continuing" it even longer. "The president has a very strong record and I think it is very fair to assume he will continue this commitment, he will continue to build on it," Browner said Thursday. But with the prospect of deep across-the-board cuts if Congress and the president don't strike a deficit reduction deal after the election, it's premature to promise a specific amount of money, she said.

REUTERS NEWS SERVICE

Drought area expands in U.S., now most extensive this summer Hot and dry conditions continued to plague large parts of the U.S. Plains and southern states as the worst U.S. drought in over five decades expanded its grip on some key farming states. At least "moderate" levels of drought have now enveloped more than 64 percent of the contiguous United States, up from 63.39 percent the week before, according to the Drought Monitor, a weekly compilation of data gathered by federal and academic scientists. "This is the greatest extent of drought we've seen all summer," said Brian Fuchs, a climatologist at the National Drought Mitigation Center at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. "The drought is easing in the east, but we're seeing more of it expand in the Central Plains, Rockies and Dakotas." The Drought Monitor's measurement of the worst level of drought, "exceptional", expanded to 6.23 percent of the land area in the contiguous U.S. for the week ended September 11, up from 6.14 percent in the prior week. The drought has been exacerbated by long stretches of high temperatures. "That has been the kicker all summer, how hot it has been," said Fuchs. Conditions in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, and Iowa grew more dire, according to the Drought Monitor. Kansas, in particular, remained almost entirely parched, with more than 60 percent of the state in exceptional drought and more than 88 percent in extreme drought. The climatologists noted "widespread expansion" of severe drought in western North Dakota and said the percent of normal precipitation has held below 50 percent throughout most of the Northern Plains over the last month. On a bright note, the levels of drought considered "severe" and "extreme" did ease in the most recent week across the nation. The portion of the contiguous United States suffering from at least "severe" drought fell to 41.81 percent from 42.48 percent. The area experiencing "extreme" levels of drought dropped to 21.09 percent from 21.45 percent. Arkansas, one of the hardest hit states, saw drought start to recede as the percentage of the state in severe or worse drought dropped to 75.72 percent from 78 percent. Missouri, likewise, saw improvement, as did Illinois.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Commentary: Let states regulate resource development "It's like déjà vu all over again." The old Yogi Berra saying comes to mind after the most recent debacle in a series of attempts by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to link groundwater contamination to hydraulic fracturing. After several months of public speculation, the EPA finally issued a press release on July 25 concluding that water supplies in Dimock, Pa., had not been contaminated by drilling activities in the area. In late 2011, after the town's residents expressed concern over the quality of their drinking water, the EPA visited Dimock to conduct surveys regarding their private wells and review drinking water data supplied by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Cabot Oil and Gas Exploration and the residents. The EPA thought it had found the perfect headline to further its political agenda, and Dimock became a poster child for anti-fracking campaigns. The town was even featured in the 2010 documentary "Gasland," which infamously showed residents igniting water coming from their kitchen faucets and pointed to hydraulic fracturing as the culprit. However, in April 2012, the agency released preliminary test results from Dimock that "did not show levels of contaminants that would give EPA reason to take immediate action." After sampling private drinking water wells serving 64 homes between January and June of 2012, the EPA eventually admitted in late July that chemical substances found during their testing were naturally occurring and not the result of hydraulic fracturing. The EPA also jumped the gun in Pavillion, Wyo., by releasing a draft report in December 2011 indicating that hydraulic fracturing was responsible for water contamination in private drinking water wells before thoroughly vetting the report. The agency bypassed the scientific process of independent peer review and publicly made claims that were not fully substantiated. Only after receiving backlash did the EPA agree to back down and retest their samples. As of June, the agency was still resampling monitoring wells and collecting data...It is clear that "one-size-fits-all" regulation from a federal administration, especially one that is garnering a reputation for masquerading premature conclusions as proven facts, is not the answer. States must fight to retain autonomy, as we have a better understanding of our unique geological, regulatory and economic environments. As Yogi Berra would say, the EPA has "made too many wrong mistakes."

BINGHAMTON PRESS AND SUN BULLETIN

Commentary: Activists must have Plan B if gas drilling is allowed Polls indicate that residents of New York State in general, and in the Southern Tier in particular, are evenly split considering hydraulic fracturing in the Marcellus Shale. The issue has become emotional until we now have two opposing camps, one that will not accept "no" for an

answer from the Department of Environmental Conservation and the other that will not accept "yes". With all that is at stake, we have come to expect a simple one word answer to a complex and pressing issue. In my perfect world, there would never be hydraulic fracturing. But, in that perfect world, there would be no drilling for oil, no mining of coal and no nuclear generation of energy. All of our needs would be derived from solar and wind power and geothermal and hydroelectric generation. We are not living in my perfect world. I have friends, several of them farmers, who own sizable tracts of land and believe that they can make a dollar or two or even "millions" from the deposits of natural gas beneath their lands. There is nothing wrong with that premise. These are basic principles of capitalism at work. Capitalistic ventures involve risks.

BLOOMBERG NEWS

Radioactive device for fracking is lost AUSTIN, Texas -- Halliburton Co. is scouring a 130-mile swath of West Texas oil fields for a lost 7-inch cylinder with radioactive material used when drilling natural gas wells by hydraulic fracturing, or fracking. Pickup trucks outfitted with detection gear retraced the route of a vehicle that carried the radioactive rod before it was reported missing Tuesday, the Houston-based company told the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The trucks drove at 10 miles an hour between Pecos, where the device was previously used on a well, and Odessa without finding the unit, according to an NRC incident report Thursday. "It's not something that produces radiation in an extremely dangerous form," Chris Van Deusen, Texas Department of State Health Services spokesman, said in an interview. "But it's best for people to stay back, 20 or 25 feet," if they find a cylinder marked "radioactive -- do not handle," he said.

Industry, States Ask Interior to Reconsider Proposed Rule on Fracking on Federal Lands The Interior Department's proposed rule to update federal regulations on hydraulic fracturing and related oil and gas drilling activity on federal lands would override the effective state practice of regulating drilling and should be withdrawn, according to a coalition of industry associations. "At the very least, we urge you to significantly revise the impractical, duplicative, and costly requirements that would be imposed on operators should this rule be finalized and implemented," the groups said. The joint comments were filed by the Independent Petroleum Association of America, the Western Energy Alliance, and a host of other associations, including not only oil and gas company groups but also drilling contractors, geophysical contractors, and royalty owners. The Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission, representing 38 state governments, similarly told Interior the proposed rule would be duplicative and unduly burdensome and should be reconsidered. IOGCC also said Interior developed the proposal without consulting states, despite their requests to collaborate